

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 EB-07 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 STR-04 OMB-01

CEA-01 COME-00 FEA-01 ACDA-05 /089 W

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R 041508Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5722

INFO AMCONGEN ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ADDIS ABABA 9334

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN ENRG

SUBJECT: TANK TRUCKS ATTACKED AGAIN ON ASSAB ROAD

REF: ADDIS 8905 AND PREVIOUS

1. ON AUGUST 2 TANK WAGONS AND FLAT-BED TRUCKS ATTACKED BY AN UNKNOWNNUMBER OF ASSAILANTS 17 KMS EAST OF MILE DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS. ONE TAK TRUCK DESTROYED AND THREE DRIVERS INJURED. SOURCES IN THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY WHO PROVIDED THIS INFO STATED THAT IN CONTRAST TO PREVIOUS AMBUSHES APPARENTLY ATTACKERS THIS TIME INTENTIONALLY SHOT AT DRIVERS. THESE TRUCKERS WERE NOT ESCORTED BY MILITARY (SEE RETEL) AS CONVOY DISBANDED AT SARDO.

2. NEW CONVOY SYSTEM HAS NOT LIVED UP TO EARLIER EXPECTATIONS REGARDING REDUCTION IN TRANSIT TIME BETWEEN ASSAB AND ADDIS, WHICH IS STILL RUNNING BETWEEN 8 AND 10 DAYS. SHORTAGES ARE NOW
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BEGINNING TO SURFACE IN OTHER AREAS OF ETHIOPIA. FOR EXAMPLE,

SHASHAMANE RAN OUT OF FUEL FOR ITS THERMAL POWER PLANT CAUSING A TEMPORARY SHUTDOWN (1 OR 2 DAYS) IN A SISAL PROCESSING FACTORY THERE. OTHER LOCATION SUCH AS MEKELE AND JIMMA HAVE REDUCED ELECTRICAL POWER SERVICE OR HAVE EXPERIENCED PERIODIC SHUTDOWNS.

3. THE ASSAB REFINERY CLOSED DOWN AROUND JULY 25 AS ITS STORAGE CAPACITY FOR FINISHED PRODUCTS IS COMPLETELY UTILIZED. OIL INDUSTRY SOURCES ALSO BELIEVE THAT SHORTAGES OF LPG COULD DEVELOP IN THE NEAR FUTURE WHICH WOULD AFFECT HOTEL AND HOME CONSUMPTION.

4. COMMENT. THE OPTIMISTIC VIEW WHICH PREVAILED IN OIL INDUSTRY CIRCLES AFTER THE REVISION OF THE CONVOY SYSTEM IS NOW TURNING TO PESSIMISM AS THE NEW ENVOY APPROACH HAS NOT NOTABLY IMPROVED DELIVERIES TO ADDIS AND HAS NOW BEEN CALLED INTO QUESTION BY THE AUGUST 2 ATTACK. CLEARLY, THE EPMG IS NOT YET OUT OF THE WOODS WITH RESPECT TO DEVISING A METHOD TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE QUANTITIES OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS TO ADDIS AND THE INTERIOR.
HUMMEL

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